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Senate Passes Continuing Appropriations Act to Fund Government Through September 30, 2013, and to Prevent a Shutdown

WASHINGTON, DC – The U.S. Senate today approved H.R. 933, the Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act by a vote of 73 to 26, taking a big step forward in preventing a government shutdown. The Senate bill passed today funds the government through September 30, 2013, the end of the fiscal year. The current continuing resolution expires on March 27, 2013.

"Working across the aisle and across the dome, the Senate has come together to prevent a government shutdown," said Chairwoman Barbara Mikulski (D-Md.). "I am so proud the Senate bill protects national security while meeting compelling human needs. It makes investments in human infrastructure like early childhood education. And it creates jobs today and jobs tomorrow by supporting research and innovation. I thank my Vice Chairman, Senator Shelby, for his support and hard work. I look forward to swift action in the House so we can focus on passing a budget, ending sequestration, and getting back to regular order."

"This is an important step in breaking from crisis mode in Washington," said Vice Chairman Richard Shelby (R-Ala.). "Chairwoman Mikulski and I set out to prevent a government shutdown, provide flexibility for those implementing budget cuts, and produce a bill that both parties in both chambers can support. It is my hope that the tone we set in meeting these objectives for the current fiscal year will carry over to our work on subsequent appropriations bills. We must continue to work together to replace a last minute, shotgun approach to reducing spending with a deliberate, targeted process."

The original House CR contained two full bills, for Defense and for Military Construction and Veterans Affairs. The Senate bill expands on the House bill, adding three domestic bills, including: Agriculture; Commerce, Justice, Science; and Homeland Security. In addition, the Senate added a number of critical provisions, to enable the government to meet its mission-critical obligations.

The bill now returns to the House for its consideration.

A link to the text of the bill is here.

Highlights of the Senate Bill

• In Agriculture, the Senate bill funds implementation of the Food Safety Modernization Act with an additional \$12.8 million not included in the House bill. This is the first major reform of food safety laws in 70 years. According to the Centers for Disease Control, 48 million people, or one in six Americans, suffer from food-borne illnesses each year.

The amendment also improves access to clean water in rural communities with an additional \$250 million not included in the House. This funding will provide an additional 165 rural communities, and 330,000 rural residents, with clean water and waste disposal, creating construction jobs today and improving community health.

• The Commerce, Justice & Science (CJS) bill provides \$15 million more than the House CR for Byrne grants, the main Federal tool to help state and local law enforcement. For COPS grants, the Senate CR provides a \$20 million increase above the House CR, in order to put nearly 1,500 new police on the beat.

CJS also supports the innovation needed to grow the economy in order to create jobs today and tomorrow. For NSF basic research, the bill provides \$221 million more than the House CR. That means 550 more grants, supporting 7,000 scientists, teachers, students, all working to make new discoveries for new products, new companies, and new jobs.

• The Homeland Security bill does more to protect the nation from cyber warfare, one of the greatest national security and economic security threats facing America today, by providing \$19 million more than the House to for cyber security.

The bill also provides \$33 million in additional support to state and local government for Fire grants to train and equip firefighters. And the Senate bill increases first responder grants by \$208 million above the House CR.

 In Labor, HHS, the Senate bill meets compelling human needs and saves lives by providing \$71 million more than the House CR for research on cancer, Alzheimer's, diabetes, and other devastating diseases

It also expands Child Care and Development Block Grants, providing \$50 million more than the House to support care for 9,000 more children from working families and adds \$33.5 million to Head Start, giving more kids a jump start on their education.

• For Transportation and Housing, the amendment fully funds highways, transit, and road safety programs at the authorized levels, a difference of almost \$700 million.